

**EXCELLENT GOVERNMENT SERVICE
ALERT!**

TO: Mayor Martin O'Malley
Members of the City Council
CARE Commissioners
All City Employees
Baltimore City Senior Centers
Eating Together in Baltimore City
Interagency Committee on Aging Services (IAC)

FROM: John P. Stewart
Executive Director

DATE: November 14, 2005

AREA/SERVICES:

Food and Nutrition – 2005 Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program – December, 2005

BACKGROUND:

Funded and managed by the United States Department of Agriculture, The Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA) and the Commission on Aging and Retirement Education (CARE), the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program established in 2001 was back in Baltimore this year to provide low income seniors with checks for fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs. Checks were redeemable at approved farmers' markets throughout Maryland. Baltimore City had six approved markets.

ALERT:

To qualify for and be able to take advantage of the program, individuals had to meet the following criteria:

- Had to be 60 years of age or older – proof of age required (anything that shows birth date)
- Had to agree to sign the following statement: “by signing below, I verify that I am age 60 or above any my income is no more than \$1,476 per month or \$17,705 per year for a one person household or \$1,978 per month or \$23,736 per year for a two person household”.

Checks were free and provided in the following manner:

- Five (5) - \$3.00 checks worth \$15.00 per senior per household
- Seniors that were homebound or may otherwise not be present to obtain checks were able to designate a substitute called a PROXY. The PROXY needed to show proof of

age for the senior for whom they were obtaining the checks. (Limit one check booklet per proxy. This was done at all distribution sites.)

- Checks were valid at the Farmers' Markets June 1, 2005 – November 30, 2005. Distribution took place at senior centers, Eating Together in Baltimore Program site locations, and through the CARE office.
- Baltimore was asked to be the host for the Community Sponsored Agricultural (CSA) program. One farmer delivered produce to three seniors centers three times each this summer.

OUTCOME:

During the month of June, CARE distributed 4100 senior farmers' market check booklets worth \$61,500.00. The sites included 15 senior centers, some senior apartment buildings and nutrition sites through CARE's Eating Together in Baltimore Program. CARE distributed booklets to some of our Medicaid Waiver clients. Nutrition education was provided through monthly menu notes, "Make Maryland Fruits and Vegetables Half Your Plate at Every Meal". This program is expected to continue for at least another three (3) years under the Federal Farm Bill.

FOLLOW-UP:

If you have any further questions regarding this Alert, please contact Rona Martiyan, MS, RD, LDN, Nutritional Consultant at CARE at 410-396-4932.

Helping Older Adults Live Better in Baltimore...One Day at a Time!

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Martin O'Malley, Mayor

John P. Stewart, Executive Director